

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY China
SUBJECT Concentration on Public Health/
Fear of Surgeons to Perform Operations

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1. The Scientific Research Academy, a part of the Medical Bureau in Peking, directs what little medical research is being done on a national level. From the nature of this research, it would appear that the Scientific Research Academy is being advised by Soviet doctors since the research requested follows research that has been performed in the USSR. There is, of course, a certain amount of research being carried on by individual doctors in their own fields of endeavor and not under the auspices of the Scientific Research Academy.
2. In 1952 there was an order from the Medical Bureau telling every medical center to concentrate their research activity on tissue therapy and on a psychological approach to painless delivery. This psychological approach consisted mainly of attempting to convince the expectant mother that there would be no pain during the birth of her child.
3. The tissue therapy experiments were conducted by taking animal skin tissue or tissue from an organ such as the liver, kidney, etc, and burying this tissue in a part of the patient's anatomy. Tissue from organs of cows, goats, dogs, and other animals was used. This tissue was refrigerated for 48 hours at four degrees Centigrade and then sterilized in an autoclave at high pressure prior to use. Juices from animal tissue were also used for injections.
4. The system of medical education has been changed greatly since the Communists came into power. Where previously a medical certificate could not be obtained without a minimum of six years' training, now doctors are being graduated in two to four years. Many doctors have been sent out to practice in villages with only two years of instruction. The government, however, is permitting certain of the brighter students, who will later be used as instructors, to take a six-year course. The background and competency of medical men who were graduated prior to the Communist regime is high. A large number of doctors were either unable or unwilling to leave China at the time the Communists took over and many have received prominent positions.
5. The system of training is more or less the same now as it has been in the past with the exception that much less time is being devoted to fundamentals. Young medical students showing promise are sent to the better equipped hospitals and medical schools for their training.

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- 2 -

6. The field in which the government has laid the most stress is that of public health. Hundreds of doctors and nurses have been sent to villages which previously had no medical personnel. Much of their work has been devoted to teaching the people the importance of keeping clean and in getting inoculations and vaccinations against the more prevalent diseases. The government has made a fair success of this program. Doctors, however, are very reluctant to prescribe for patients, and surgeons often refuse to perform operations that are indicated. Doctors are often afraid of their patients who, if not satisfied, will complain to the local government, and the doctor will be in trouble. It is also very difficult to get rid of patients who have once been admitted to hospitals. Under the present regime, the patients must be satisfied and, since there are many tubercular patients who are happy to stay on at the hospitals, this has become quite a problem.

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